

MEMORANDUM FOR Record

SUBJECT: Minutes of River Resources Forum Meeting #81, 29&30 April 2008

1. Introductions / Approve Minutes/ Meetings– A meeting of the River Resources Forum (RRF) was held on 29 & 30 April 2008 at Signatures Restaurant in Winona, MN. Attached is the attendance list [Attachment 81-2] from the meeting. Following introductions, the Minutes from RRF #80 were approved as prepared. The next meetings were scheduled: 26 & 27 August 2008 location TBD in either Pool 6 or Pool 8 area; and 2 & 3 December 2008 in Bloomington, MN.

2. Agency Activities – Note: Only the agencies listed below had significant information to report.

- A. COE (Tapp): Dan Krumholz is retiring from the COE so Steve presented Dan with a letter and plaque recognizing his 38 years of service on the river and working with the RRF. The dredge quarters barge, Taggatz, is scheduled for delivery in late June 2008 and put into service in early July. The dredge Thompson is cleaned out and scheduled to be moved to the MN Marine Art Museum in Winona, MN after it meets the SHPO requirements. The first tow arrived in St. Paul on 11 April. MV Mississippi is scheduled to be in the district from 6-12 Aug with an open house in St. Paul on 8 Aug and the public meeting and lunch in Red Wing on 11 Aug.
(Otto): LUAP maps are completed and being reviewed by FWS. They will then be sent to other agencies for review. The plan is for approval in fall by Col Christenson. They will be posted on the internet with some hard copies available.
(Brenner, MVR): Locks 16, 17, and 18 are closed due to high water.
- B. FWS (Hultman): Rick Fritsche will work as the assistant manager in Winona. There are new rules that take affect starting 22 May resulting from the CCP [Attachment 81-3]. There is a reed canary grass study ongoing. The FWS directors will be in the area 6-9 Aug and will ride the MV Mississippi.
- C. NPS (Johnson): Dan McGuiness has retired. Grant from Patagonia for boat and ride to plant willows on Island 112.
- D. IA DNR (Konrad): Holly Stoerker is retiring as the executive director from UMRBA. Barb Naramore was promoted and they are interviewing for her replacement.
- E. MN DNR (Wooden): Flood recovery efforts continue in SE MN; the legislature appropriated some \$147.8M in relief to the 7 counties included in the disaster declaration; DNR received \$6.7M for flood hazard mitigation, debris removal, and repairs to state facilities.
- F. MN DOT (Lambert): Commissioner is gone and has been replaced with someone from FHWA. Port development went from \$2M to \$0 due to a budget cut by the governor. Red Wing wanted money to purchase their own dredge.
- G. MPCA (Mader): Doug Hall retired in mid Feb and has been replaced by Dana Vanderbash.
- H. WI DNR (Benjamin): Nothing new to report.
- I. WI DOT (Kieck): JF Brennen submitted an application for dock wall repair and dredging. A 3 year plan was submitted 1 Apr for LaCrosse road improvements and docks at Isla La Plume. 3 grants were submitted in February. Cassville ferry will

spend \$56K of the \$400K to repower the tow boat. There is a WI Commercial Port Association meeting in LaCrosse in Aug.

- J. LMRWD (Schwalbe): Went to state legislature for bonding, but no money. They are supporting Rep. Laning in creating watershed commissions throughout the entire state – bill was tabled. Try to introduce their own MN River Basin Bill. Cargill site will be prepped in May and be ready for use. Starting to prepare the Watershed District plan which is due every 10 years and may be looking for input.
- K. UMWA (Genz): River traffic is slow.
- L. DU (Pederson): New to the RRF. Looking at issues on the UMR with an \$800K grant from the McKnight Foundation and would like to work with the FWS and DNR's. Also looking into land acquisitions and restoration along the UMR.

3. Channel Maintenance Program [Attachment 81–4]

A. Survey Activities: (Lund)

- Surveying placement sites, spillways, 5A, 6, 7, 8, and Reno Bottoms.
- Doing Channel Runs.
- Flows are increasing at upper locks, dropping on lower locks.

B: Mechanical Dredging:

- L&S was apparent low bidder initially; Newt Marine filed a protest based on Small Business criteria; Newt Marine won the protest and was awarded the contract as the second bidder. The contract is for 1 year with two option years.

C. Channel Management (Machajewski)

- Lowry Bridge closed on Apr 24 and there is a meeting on May 1. County plans to install movement sensors by 1 Jun.
- Flatiron could not get their barges for the I35 bridge through Lake Pepin when it was froze and cost \$200K/day.
- Docks have been installed in Hastings and they will be monitored.
- Will continue to work on Pool 2, Freeborn Study in FY09.
- Genz stated Aggregate Industries wants to close Grey Cloud to Lower Nelson Mine.

D. Channel Maintenance and Placement Site Schedule (Lund)

- Placement site maps have been updated and are posted on CMMP website for review. The info sheets are not updated yet.
- Due to high water, condition surveys have not been conducted so there is no dredge schedule yet.
- Scot Johnson recommended island construction in Pool 3 in both North and Sturgeon Lake with dredged material from Corps Is.
- Paul is waiting for Pool 8 Island 116 design from EC-H.

4. Environmental Management Program (Powell)

A. 2008 budget – Allocated \$16.8M; MVP & MVS received \$3.365M and \$4.379K for MVR. Money spent to pursue various stages of Pool 8 Ph III; implement Clear Lake dredging; work on DPR's for Harpers and Capoli; performance evaluation and monitoring; plan for transition from EMP to NESP.

B. FY09 Budget – Presidents Budget is \$20M

C. FY08 Construction Update

- (1) Pool 8 Phase III Stage 2A – M&R will complete the other half of N1 in Jun;
- Stage 2B – Matteson awarded base bid and 2 highest cost options. Will award

last option when additional funds available. They will start work in Jun and complete base by Sep 30.

Stage 3 – Team met in Feb to discuss material sources, P&S is scheduled for completion in Sep 08.

(2) Pool Slough Wetland Complex – Functioning and filled by gravity this spring.

(3) Spring Lake Islands – Preparing O&M manuals. Trees planted by agencies and volunteers on 22 Apr and 2 May.

(4) Clear Lake – P&S prepared; BCOE held 9 Apr; plan to advertise end of May; if bids too high then will use wetland scrapes.

D. Planning and Design

(1) Capoli Slough – DPR in Sep08 and preparing draft biological assessment.

(2) Harpers Slough – Need mussel survey in summer 08; team will meet in Jun to determine proposed plan; draft DPR in Sep 08.

(3) Conway Lake, Lake Winneshiek, and McGregor Lake deferred due to funding shortage.

E. EMP – NESP: Projects that will be completed under EMP are Clear Lake and Pool 8 PhIII Stg 3 and the DPRs for Capoli and Harbors. The other projects will be funded by NESP.

5. Navigation & Ecosystem Sustainability Program (DeZellar)

A. NESP

(1) Don Powell received Civil Servant of the Year

(2) FY08 – there are less funds than previous 4 years (\$8.8M) and the funds are used for items needed to report to Congress such as the Implementation Guidance

(3) FY09 – \$0 in Administration Budget. Possible we will get in to a continuing resolution based on the \$8.8M.

(4) Implementation Guidance [Attachment 81-5] – Implementation Reports are due to congress on progress

(5) Gretchen recommended a statement from the RRF was needed from the RRF and sent to the COL on public involvement. Gretchen and Steve will prepare an email for the RRF to review prior to forwarding to the COL.

B. Integration Paper (Benjamin) [Attachment 81-6]

The River Council will no longer exist and will be replaced by the Advisory Panel who is represented by all agencies. The graph portion of the paper will need to be further discussed.

Martin Konrad motioned and Rebecca Wooden seconded to endorse the RRF Integration with the NESP Program document with the three changes recommended by Rebecca. The motion was endorsed by consensus.

Gretchen will edit the document with the recommended changes and forward to the RRF members.

6. Fish & Wildlife Work Group (Anderson)

- Discussed drawdown plans for pools 3, 5, and 9

- Geomorphic Reach 3 Workshop is scheduled for May in LaCrosse, WI to define NESP Ecosystem goals and objectives

- Water Control Website is not accessible to agencies. They now have to use RiverGages.com which does not provide the same data as the previous site. Any comments on the new website need to be provided to Water Control.
- The group is pleased with the construction and results of the Spring Lake Island complex; however, there are concerns they may be too costly with O&M funds.
- Small scale restoration projects - Some projects were pursued under EMP. Would provide small ecosystem opportunities. Dick Otto suggested putting together a budget package for 5 year list of different techniques to see if different items will work. Randy Urich and Scot Johnson may put something together for FY10. Ft McCoy has a small dredge – Kurt Brownell was suggested as the POC. Have a work subgroup meeting in Jun/Jul before the next RRF.

7. Water Level Management (Schlagenhaft)

A. Drawdowns [Attachment 81-7]

(1) Pool 6 - Scheduled for a minor drawdown summer 08. No funding for recreation access dredging (PlayMor, Prairie Island, and Trempealeau Marina); monitor vegetation; there will be signs at locks, rec access boat landings, and the website.

(DeZellar) - Jeff stated there is a public notice ready for release; he thanked the agency partners for stepping up to the plate on their efforts in preparing for the drawdown; the drawdown is funded under O&M and not NESP with assistance from DNR's, FWS, and UMESC.

Gretchen Benjamin motioned and Don Hultman seconded to endorse the Pool 6 drawdown. The motion was endorsed by consensus.

Steve Tapp read the COE's position on the drawdown which stated the COE reserves the right to unilaterally abandon the drawdown for channel safety.

(2) Pool 3 – UMRCC will conduct vegetation study; want to create advisory committee for Pool 3; 500 – 1000 acres could be exposed; would be the third pool in seven years.

(DeZellar) – A fact sheet was prepared in 07 with NESP funds and sent out for review and comment. Comments were received and need to be resolved with no funding. Three copies were sent to WIDNR, COE, and NPS.

B. Historical Drawdown

(1) A power point was presented showing how the pools were operated historically and that water levels were typically lower than current operations.

(2) Task Force Recommendation (Wege) [Attachment 81-8]

- Discussed ideas for keeping drawdown's moving forward if NESP funding is not available.

(3) Adaptive Management Strategy [Attachment 81-9]

- Discussed the document and need to further discuss over the next 6-12 months how the COE can create a program for drawdowns

8. Floodplain Restoration (Schlagenhaft)

- Steve recommended Tim provide a goal for the RRF to look at so a Floodplain Restoration group could be formed. Tim will develop an outline with more details on membership and activities of a potential floodplain restoration task force.
- Gretchen suggested we do a systematic floodplain restoration with other district because there is more need downstream versus in the St Paul district. MN has more floodplains than WI. Todd with TNC is working with St Louis District and would be a good POC.
- Don Hultman stated the Middle Miss group south of St Louis would be similar to this group and he could provide a charter.

9. Recreation Work Group (Berg) [Attachment 80-10]

- A. Boating Study – Discussed doing studies every 5 years. Need to address the time the photos were taken, they weren't ideal times. Rebecca stated they would use the information for funding rec programs, safety, etc. The data isn't very accessible to find, the quarries aren't easy. Maybe money could be spent to refine the program.
- B. Beach Plans
 - (1) Pool 9 - Plan is out for review to RWG members. Plan to finalize in 2008.
 - (2) Pool 10 - OSIT meeting planned for 2008 then start plan.

10. Navigation Work Group (Lambert)

- A. RR critical locations – Identified locations where channel and RR come together. 10 sites identified as critical sites. Locks have talked to tows making them cogniscent of this conflict. Want emergency phone numbers from RR to pass on the locks.
- B. LaCrosse RR – Want to replace with Truman and Hobbs Fed grant which pays 96%.
- C. Mooring Buoy – Looking into moving mooring buoy below LD8 just upstream.
- D. Pool 2 Freeborn – Looking into straightening channel at RM 818. There are two gas lines under the channel.
- E. Red Wing Boat docks – Paul is still checking into permits for putting the docks in.
- F. Fleeting Study – NESP project will look at historic, current, and future barge fleeting.

Steve Tapp
Co-Chairman, RRF

Att:

- 81-1 Agenda
- 81-2 Attendance Sheet
- 81-3 FWS CCP Fact Sheet
- 81-4 CMC Channel Mgmt Schedule
- 81-5 Implementation Guidance
- 81-6 RRF - NESP Integration Paper
- 81-7 WLMTF Update
- 81-8 WLMTF Drawdown Recommendation
- 81-9 Adaptive Management Guidelines
- 81-10 RWG Activities